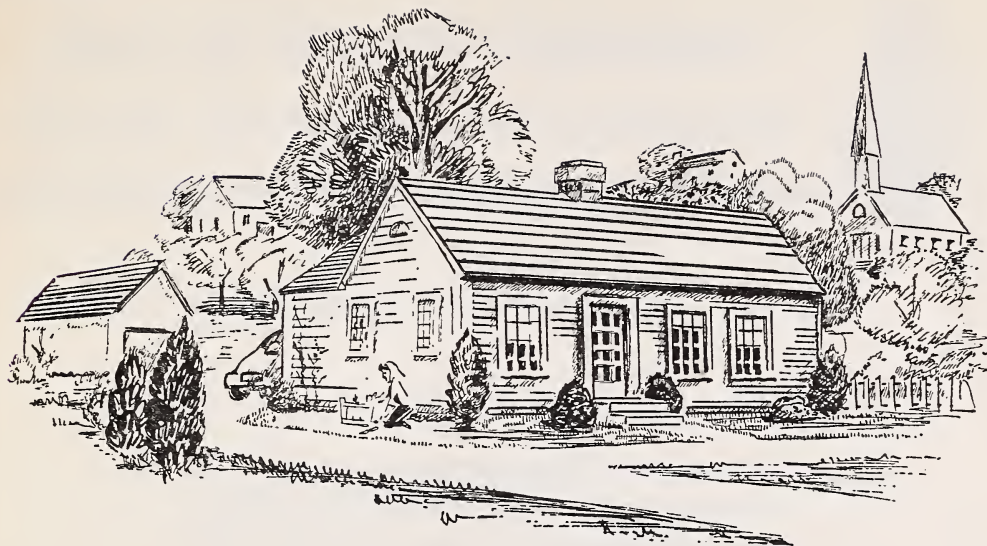


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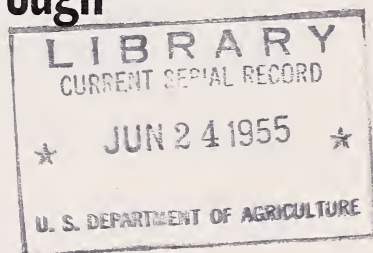
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**Home and Community  
Improvement Through  
GARDENING and  
LANDSCAPING**



***A plan for  
individual and group action***

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

Federal Extension Service, Washington 25, D. C.

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This program aid has been prepared as a guide for State and county extension workers and individuals desiring to improve homes and communities through better landscaping and gardening. Since a limited edition will not permit widespread distribution it is hoped that these and other interested leaders and organizations will revise it to fit local situations and to distribute as seems best. Permission is granted to reproduce any or all parts without credit.

# Home and Community Improvement Through Gardening and Landscaping

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## A plan for individual and group action

- . . . Are we proud of our front yards?
- . . . Are our home grounds and those of our neighbors well planned and planted for convenience, use, and attractiveness?
- . . . Is our community so well planted with trees, shrubs, and grass that visitors say, "I would like to live here"?

## OUR YARDS

Beautiful surroundings transform a house and lot into an attractive home and an enjoyable, useful yard. An appropriate foundation planting, cooling shade trees, outdoor living room and cooking area, service yard, play and recreation centers, and garden for food and flowering beauty, combine to give us real satisfaction and happiness.

Attractive landscaping increases the resale value of our property and affords more comfortable living for the whole family. It makes us proud of our homes and our neighbors more proud of us.

## FIRST WE PLAN AND THEN WE PLANT

Our homes were built according to well thought-out plans. Beautiful and useful yards are carefully planned, too. They don't just happen.

We want privacy, which usually comes from plant screens and hedges.

We want comfortable outdoor living.

We want beautiful flowers and foliage that will be attractive all year round.

Home fruits, nuts, small fruits, and vegetables are desirable to supplement our diets.

Almost all of the information we need is available nearby. Use the local information sources, which are listed on page 5. Local landscape planners, nurserymen, experienced amateurs, garden clubs, and garden centers particularly can suggest what and how to plant.

Professional landscape architects make a business of planning. If the job is a big one, it would be wise to obtain the services of such professionals. However, many homeowners may not find this practical. By closely observing other well-landscaped properties and by reading and studying available information, we can get an excellent idea of what and where to plant. Keep in mind that we want to create a beautiful picture from inside the

house as we look out, and from outside the house as we look in at the property. House and earth can be tied together with plants to give pleasure to everyone. *WE CAN DO IT OURSELVES.*

## WELL-LANDSCAPED HOMES MEAN BETTER COMMUNITIES

Homes that are well landscaped mean:

1. Better living.
2. More inviting neighborhoods.
3. Better business.
4. Higher property values.
5. Better health and greater opportunity for recreation.
6. Greater civic pride.
7. Improvement of local land rather than deterioration.
8. Land kept in better condition for productive use, if needed.
9. Greater attractiveness for visitors and tourists.

Many communities have attracted thousands of visitors, and consequently business to local firms, by making their environs beautiful with special species of plants. Examples are: Portland, Oreg., Columbus, Ohio, and many other cities and towns with rose plantings; Rochester, N. Y., lilacs; Atlanta, Ga., dogwood; Charleston, S. C., and Mobile, Ala., camellias and azaleas; and Ithaca, N. Y., forsythia. Some towns have increased permanent residential populations considerably as a result of their outstanding plantings of attractive shrubs and trees.

## THE SITUATION TODAY

Many homes and communities are attractive. Many others are not. This can be tested simply by standing in front of your own property, or by looking at the streets of the town itself. If they are not pleasing to you, it's time to make them more attractive.

One of the common faults with older homes and buildings is that they are overplanted. The trees and shrubbery have become too crowded and too big. It is not uncommon to see places with "foundation plantings" reaching the second story. These shrubs need thinning, pruning, and replacing. Dwarf shrubs are now available as substitutes for the tall-growing ones of earlier years.

Hundreds of thousands of new houses have been built in recent years. Whole new communities have sprung up. Most builders have recognized the increased values of good landscaping and have planted lawns and some shrubs and trees. Many others, especially where housing shortages are acute, have left buildings standing out in bare relief without benefit of grass, tree, or shrub.

Many public buildings, churches, schools, institutions, factories, office buildings, and also parks and highways need beautification. They need either renovation or a complete new job of landscaping.

## YARDS AND TOWNS CAN BE MADE MORE BEAUTIFUL

First we must recognize the need for further beautification and then do something about it. Individual action is needed for beautifying private properties. Local committees, cooperating with local authorities, can accomplish outstanding work to make the community more beautiful. Parks, public buildings, highways, and homes can be landscaped and maintained in such a way that they will be an everlasting joy to local residents and visitors. The work doesn't need to be done all at once. It can be done gradually, bit by bit, year after year, until the full effect desired bursts upon you and your family, and townspeople.

## COMMUNITY LEADERS WANTED

Public-spirited citizens are urgently needed who will take the lead in organiz-

ing local information services and campaign or action programs.

Outstanding service can be performed in helping to make local citizens and communities derive full satisfaction from home and community planting projects.

Support of the newspapers and radio and television stations is a major consideration. Not only can they supply garden "know-how" but they can give publicity to the action programs. Many of them have successfully sponsored local contests and awards programs to the great benefit of the community.

Service club officers, local businessmen, garden club members, nurserymen, park authorities, and others qualified are usually willing to serve on committees.

Permanent organizations for home and community beautification, such as community improvement councils or village improvement societies, can be formed.

## HOW TO PLAN LOCAL COOPERATION

The success of any home and community planting program depends to a great extent upon the organization behind it.

### How To Begin

Someone will need to start the ball rolling. It may be an individual with a strong inspiration for community betterment, or it may be a small group of such persons. After determining in their own minds what they think should be done, they will want to test public reaction and gain support by discussing the project in a preliminary way with town and county officials, county extension services, and leaders in various organizations, such as local newspaper, radio, and television executives, local nurserymen and landscape architects, local garden clubs (both men's and women's), the service groups, chamber of commerce, Kiwanis, Rotary, and Lions Clubs, banks, and schools.

## General Meeting

A general meeting of those interested should then be called, to which representatives of organizations most concerned should be especially invited. At the general meeting a chairman and a community planning committee are chosen.

## Plan

The central planning committee should then work out plans of action with definite objectives. Goals should be established both for home and community projects. Committees will need to be appointed to handle publicity, education, group purchasing, and other phases of the work.

## LOCAL SOURCES OF COOPERATION

Many communities are fairly well contained units and have trained people who can advise and help with the beautification program.

Here are some of the local sources that may be of assistance:

### Officials

County commissioners  
Mayors  
City managers  
Park officials  
City foresters  
Town officers (council)  
Planning commissions  
Librarians  
Public work officials  
(Local fire departments often help in planting programs by supplying water.)  
Boards of education

### Business and Community Groups

Local garden centers  
Women's garden clubs  
Men's garden clubs  
Service clubs  
Village improvement societies

Chamber of commerce  
 Junior chamber of commerce  
 Local newspapers  
 Local radio stations  
 Farm Bureau  
 Farmers' Union  
 The Grange  
 National Council of Farmer Cooperatives  
 Other farm organizations  
 4-H Clubs  
 Future Farmers of America  
 Farm women's organizations  
 Parent-teacher groups  
 Boy Scouts of America  
 Girl Scouts of the U. S. A.  
 Friends of the Land  
 Church organizations  
 Real estate boards  
 Camp Fire Girls  
 Merchants' associations  
 Library auxiliaries

## Advisers

State and county extension services  
 of the land-grant colleges  
 Garden club leaders  
 Nurserymen  
 Garden centers  
 Seedsmen  
 Florists  
 Professional gardeners  
 Schoolteachers (botany and other  
 subjects)  
 Vocational agriculture teachers  
 Horticulture and science teachers  
 Arborists or local tree experts  
 Consulting foresters  
 Landscape architects  
 Garden editors of newspapers  
 Home service magazine editors  
 Park executives  
 Outstanding amateur gardeners  
 Farm organization leaders

## POSSIBLE LOCAL IDEAS AND PROJECTS

Here are some suggestions for community drives:

1. Better home landscaping.
2. More shade trees along streets.

3. A community rose garden.
  4. Landscaping and planting of public and semipublic buildings — libraries, schools, churches, airports, courthouses, parks, and grange halls.
  5. Beautification of highways and highway entrances to the community.
  6. Development of a local park or arboretum.
  7. Establishment of a garden center.
  8. Establishment of community and school forests.
  9. Participation in Plant America program.
  10. Participation in the Keep America Beautiful programs (KAB). "Don't Be a Litterbug."
  11. More attractive lawns, rural mailbox improvement, safe and beautiful farm driveway entrances.
  12. A lawn and garden contest or a home grounds improvement contest.
- A contest always creates interest among young or old. A community lawn and garden contest with judges, score cards, and awards given out at appropriate ceremonies, can result in remarkable progress. Newspapers are ideal sponsors for such contests. Many vegetable garden contests have been held with success. Schoolchildren can do wonders when given proper encouragement. Poster contests, essay contests, production and judging contests, are other examples. With each contest a score card is developed which gives the standards of excellence—the principal points to be considered. The score card, when given proper

publicity, becomes an excellent teaching tool.

13. Conservation planting and beautification of eroded land within the community.
14. Living memorial plantings.
15. Preservation of existing natural resources, beauties, and assets.
16. Making the community famous for a certain species of flowering tree, shrub, or coniferous evergreen.

A partial list of trees and shrubs that have been used by communities to win them renown includes:

Rose  
Lilac  
Wisteria  
Redbud  
Camellia  
Azalea  
Forsythia  
Dogwood  
Eucalyptus  
Oleander  
Hibiscus  
Spirea  
Peach  
Magnolia  
Flowering crabapple  
Pine, spruce, and hemlock  
Holly  
Flowering plum  
Flowering almond  
Flowering cherry  
Goldenrain-tree  
Maple  
Elm  
Rhododendron

Chrysanthemum  
Mountain-ash  
Apple  
Hydrangea

## LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Under the guidance of landscape professionals, horticulturists, and local educators, work out a leadership training program. The State and county agricultural extension services with their specialists and agents can perhaps be of service in this connection. They can help outline, obtain instructors for, and conduct training courses relative to the various aspects of the program or programs.

These training courses might include such subjects as:

1. What and how to plant locally.
2. Home landscaping information and advice.
3. How to plan local or sectional beautification.
4. How to obtain cooperation.
5. How to publicize the program.
6. How to organize the work.
7. How to conduct the project successfully.
8. How to continue the program from year to year.
9. How and what to plant to improve home grounds.
10. How to make the town famous for its horticultural beauty.
11. How to maintain the beauty of the municipality permanently.

**Let's do our part to help make our homes and  
communities the beautiful and attractive  
places we all want them to be.**

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